



STATE OF WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

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January 29, 2003

TO: Stephen M. Jordan, President

FROM: Marty Brown, Director

SUBJECT: Eastern Washington University Reported Incident Does Not Merit Review

Pursuant to RCW 43.41.370 and the Guidelines For Reporting Incidents to the Office of Financial Management (OFM), Eastern Washington University (EWU) submitted an Incident Report to OFM. The Report notifies OFM that at least seven young women who participated in the Just for Kix dance camp, held at EWU from July 11-14, 2002, were diagnosed with an E. coli infection. The Spokane Regional Health District (SRHD) conducted an extensive investigation into the cause of the infection.

The SRHD investigation included multiple site visits, analysis of food and water samples, interviews with staff and surveys of camp participants. The EWU food service was immediately closed, notifications were made to faculty, staff and students and updated information regarding the SRHD investigation was provided. The SRHD determined the source of the E. coli outbreak was packaged romaine lettuce supplied by Spokane Produce. EWU purchased the produce from its contract vendor, Food Services of America (FSA).

RCW 43.41.370(1) requires the Director of OFM to appoint a loss prevention review team when the death of a person, serious injury to a person, or other substantial loss is alleged or suspected to be caused at least in part by the actions of a state agency unless the Director, in his or her discretion, determines that the incident "does not merit review". Applying the criteria for loss prevention reviews, issued November 18, 2002, I have determined that the incident you reported does not merit review. This incident appears to be an isolated incident with no short or long-term history of occurrence. Although there were multiple victims, only one case was serious. SRHD conducted an extensive external review, which included food and water service as well as other potential contamination sources. Another review would add little value to further reduce risk. Therefore, an additional external review is not warranted.

This type of incident can reoccur. EWU should have established procedures for handling emergencies, including who to contact within EWU and how to communicate information to the stakeholders. I recommend that EWU develop written procedures to handle future incidents.

This decision will be posted on the OFM website. If you have any questions about the criteria or its application to this incident, please contact either Roselyn Marcus at (360) 902-7396 or Gary Robinson at (360) 902-0528.

C: Judith M. Page, Human Resources Associate for Human Rights and Risk Management
Roselyn Marcus, Loss Prevention Review Team Manager